

THE NATION

AND ATHENÆUM

CHRISTMAS BOOK SUPPLEMENT

DE QUINCEY

Confessions of an English Opium Eater—together with their sequels, *The English Mail Coach* and *Suspiria de Profundis*.
By THOMAS DE QUINCEY. With an Introductory Essay by GEORGE SAINTSBURY. (Constable, 21s.)

To one elderly reviewer, impinging upon octogenarianism, the name of De Quincey, coupled with a handful of his writings, sounds in the ear like the faint murmur of a distant, sea breaking upon a once familiar shore, for it is now more than sixty years since we first discovered for ourselves the fourteen volumes, in black, with gold letterings, of the first collected edition of the works of the English Opium Eater. The volumes reposed in the Lyceum Library at the bottom of Bold Street, Liverpool, and upon them we pounced with the ferocity and indiscriminating appetite of a hungry jackal.

In 1865 De Quincey appeared to be the *ne plus ultra* of a kind of writing that from that day to this, for good or ill, has never let go its hold upon us, viz., that of the "Miscellaneous" Author.

Reading apparently so boundless, learning so great, allusions so manifold, humour so excruciating, audacity so terrifying, parentheses so long, notes so voluminous, prose so reckless yet so exhilarating, we had never expected to find bound up in a long series of volumes! We took them out, one by one, and never rested till we had made our way through them all. Here indeed, we exclaimed, was a true man of learning and of letters. Even his jokes made us laugh.

In 1865 De Quincey had been dead some six years or so, but there were then in Liverpool men and women who had known him whilst living in the neighbourhood, and had stories to tell of his strange, almost uncanny, personality. We had never seen him, though we had seen, in Castle Street, another Author, not indeed in the least like him, but possessed of the same haunting charm, Hawthorne.

De Quincey and Hawthorne went some way in those now far off days to consecrate the streets of a town (now a city) which used to be described by heated pulpites (after a Corporation dinner) as the "Modern Tyre."

We have often wondered since those days how it has fared with our *Ne Plus Ultra*. Not that we have ever questioned the continued vitality of De Quincey—many later laurels still green will have withered—many still well-frequented shrines will have become deserted, ere the "Miscellaneous Grave and Gay" of Thomas De Quincey cease to be read; still, it is a far cry back to 1821, when in the columns of that marvellous magazine called the LONDON, the Essays of Elia and the Confessions of an English Opium Eater jostled one another, claiming and getting almost instant recognition. Old magazines take up too much room to be allowed to find their way into the small houses wherein we are condemned to live, but if there is to be an exception, let it be for the LONDON MAGAZINE from 1820-1830.

We can hardly hope that De Quincey should show no signs of wear and tear. Few of our early favourites do that, and De Quincey was, so it gradually dawned upon us as we grew older, a vulnerable author.

Constable & Co., by adding the beautifully printed volume named above to their "Classics," have given us the chance, ere we finally depart this realm, of getting at least some sort of an answer to our anxious inquiries after the health and continued vitality of our once irresistible De Quincey.

The volume now under notice will be found to contain a reprint of the First Edition of "The Confessions," as it appeared in London in book-form in 1822. The publishers have added to this reprint, those three famous Essays entitled "The Glory of Motion," "Going down with Victory," and "The Vision of Sudden Death," which first appeared in

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE in 1849, and also the well-known "Suspiria de Profundis," which, though included in the American Collected Edition which preceded the English Edition of 1856, were not included in the English Edition and were published over here by Adam and Charles Black in 1874, though, in magazine form, they had existed from 1845.

To this collection Mr. Saintsbury has prefaced a characteristic and most informative Essay.

It should be said at once that the "Confessions" here printed from the Edition of 1822 are not the "Confessions" we read in 1865 in the fourth volume of the Collected Edition of 1856, but another, a much shorter, and a far better book. The First Edition of 1822 is a small book, well printed, and has but 206 pages; the Edition of 1856 occupies 275 closely printed pages, with long notes at intervals. On the average there are some 200 words on each of the pages of the First Edition, and at least 330 words on each page of the revised edition.

In our judgment Mr. Saintsbury and his publishers have done wisely in sticking to the original text and eliminating the enormous superstructures that De Quincey piled upon it thirty-five years afterwards; thereby destroying the effect always produced by unity of purpose. Those readers who only know the "Confessions" from the later editions must, we think, after reading the original text as here presented agree with this judgment.

Lest, however, it should be supposed that the "Confessions" as here rendered do not contain the most characteristic and moving passages that will always be associated with the "English Opium Eater," we will make one familiar quotation that will be found on page 122 of this new edition:—

"All this and much more than I can say or have time to say, the reader must enter into before he can comprehend the unimaginable horror which these dreams of Oriental imagery and mythological tortures impressed upon me. Under the connecting feeling of tropical heat and vertical sunlights I brought together all creatures, birds, beasts, reptiles, all trees and plants, usages and appearances that are found in all tropical regions, and assembled them together in China or Indostan. From kindred feelings I soon brought in Egypt and all her gods under the same law. I was stared at, hooted at, grinned at, chattered at, by monkeys, paroquets, by cockatoos. I ran into pagodas, and was fixed for centuries at the summit or in secret rooms; I was the idol, I was the priest, I was worshipped, I was sacrificed. I fled from the wrath of Brama, through all the forests of Asia—Vishnu hated me; Seeva laid wait for me; I came suddenly upon Isis and Osiris—I had done a deed they said which the ibis and the crocodile trembled at. I was buried for a thousand years in stone coffins, with mummies and sphinxes, in narrow chambers at the heart of eternal pyramids. I was kissed with cancerous kisses by crocodiles, and laid confounded with all unutterable slimy things, amongst reeds and Niletic mud."

All authors run risks of being forgotten. What is De Quincey's greatest risk? Mr. Saintsbury has, good-humouredly (all great readers are of necessity good-humoured at heart), attributed De Quincey's greatest fault to the presence at his birth of the Fairy RIGMAROLE; but were we in search of a word that should best describe an over-indulged tendency in an author in whom and in whose faults we greatly delight, we should find it in a word belonging to the dead vocabulary of the old race of pleaders in the happily abolished High Court of Chancery, who when disposed to nip a suit in the bud often advised that something called a "Demurrer" should be lodged on the ground that the Bill of Complaint was *multifarious*. To stuff too many complaints for relief into one Bill was bad pleading.

De Quincey's "multifariousness" has lost him many readers and endangers his popularity. Happily, so at least we believe, there will always be a jocund company who when he pipes must dance.

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.

THE HUMORISTS REVIEW THEMSELVES

SCENE: A blasted heath. Enter Mr. Hilaire Belloc, introducing Mr. T. Michael Pope.

MR. BELLOC: Mr. Pope has the great advantage of writing in verse what he feels inclined to write and of publishing what he feels inclined to publish.

MYSELF: What is that?

MR. POPE: A little book called "Capital Levities," illustrated by Bohun Lynch and Ladislas (Hurst & Blackett, 3s. 6d.).

MYSELF: It is a capital title.

MR. BELLOC: Best of all, I think, is the opening quatrain. Quote it, Pope.

MR. POPE: It is from "A Child's Guide to London," and describes St. Paul's Cathedral.

(Sings.) "In this cathedral vast and dim,
The congregation sing a hymn;
The music, it is understood,
Is, on the whole, extremely good."

MR. BELLOC: The lapidary style in verse should be the aim of all modern men. It is here achieved.

(Enter Mr. A. P. Herbert and the Shrinking Chorus.)

MR. HERBERT and CHORUS (singing):

"Don't look at us!
We are so shy.
Be generous,
And hide your eye.
Ignore, we beg, the shapely leg
We coyly kick before us.
We do it just because we must—
We are the Shrinking Chorus."

MR. HERBERT (solo): I don't agree with Mr. Belloc. In the same volume with these pretty dears, "Plain Jane" (T. Fisher Unwin, 6s.), you will find a modern drama, "Two Gentlemen of Soho," dressed in Shakespearean costume. Some may think this play wordy, but then there are brutes who think Shakespeare wordy.

(Enter Mr. E. V. Knox, with two very lively books, one on each arm.)

MR. KNOX: I'm "Evoc" of PUNCH, you know. Allow me to introduce my friends. This is "I'll Tell the World!" (Chatto & Windus, 6s.). He's illustrated by George Morrow. And this is "Awful Occasions" (Methuen, 5s.). Most of him is out of PUNCH, so you won't feel strangers. We've just dropped in to say that this play of yours is getting into a mess; all the characters come in, but they don't go out again; they collect in gangs. That is why I can't write a play. My friend, "Awful Occasions," will tell you all about it.

THE OTHER BOOK (interrupting): No he won't! I'll tell the world! It may be objected that I contain verse as well as prose. The reason for this is that the present writer (meaning him) was determined to spare his adversary the reader no kind of pain. For a similar reason Mr. George Morrow has consented to illustrate me.

(Enter His Honour Judge Edward Abbott Parry, also with two companions, "Katawampus," Heinemann, 7s. 6d., and "Butter-Scotia," Heinemann, 6s.)

MYSELF (politely): I am very glad to meet your Honour, but I don't think I've had the pleasure of meeting your friends?

JUDGE PARRY: No, but they had the honour of being bagged by your little daughter as soon as they entered your house, and they are already cherished friends of hers.

(Enter Mr. A. A. Milne, Christopher Robin, and Winnie the Pooh, carrying between them "Now We are Six," with decorations by E. H. Shepard, Methuen, 7s. 6d.)

MR. MILNE: So are we. We don't need introducing.

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN: No, but we're all poetry again this time. (Sings):

"If I were John and John were Me,
Then he'd be six and I'd be three.
If John were Me and I were John,
I shouldn't have these trousers on."

Pooh wants us to say that he thought it was a different book; and he hopes you won't mind, but he walked through it one day, looking for his friend Piglet, and sat down on some of the pages by mistake.

(Enter "The Little Pagan Faun," by Patrick R. Chalmers, with scissor-cuts by L. Hummel, Cape, 5s.)

L. P. F.: Please I'm another one out of PUNCH.

MYSELF: Well, you're perfectly charming, my dear, wherever you come from, scissor-cuts and all.

(Enter "The Mirror of Fashion," Medici Society, 2s. 6d.)

M. OF F. (saucily): I've got scissor-cuts, too!

(Enter "The Wind That Wouldn't Blow," by A. B. Chrisman, Dent, 7s. 6d.)

W. T. W. B.: So've I. I'm a collection of topsy-turvy Chinese tales, I am.

(Enter Charles the rooster.)

CHARLES: Talking of topsy-turvy, what about me? I come out of "To and Again," by Walter R. Brooks (Knopf, 7s. 6d.), and I take all the animals to Florida for the winter months and have fearful adventures.

(Enter "Clove and Lettuce," by "Plummy," illustrated by Dolly Tree, Diamond Press, 2s. 6d.)

CLOVE: Well, what about us? We're supposed to be rabbits, but we talk our way through the book like "society ladies" in the illustrated weeklies.

(Enter Joe and Sylvia from "The Marvellous Land of Snergs," by E. A. Wyke-Smith, illustrated by George Morrow, Benn, 7s. 6d.)

JOE: Please, sir, those people ar'n't out of proper children's fairy-land. We are. I shouldn't wonder if we come to be loved like Peter Pan and Sylvie and Bruno.

MYSELF: You look attractive children, anyway.

(Enter Doris Webster and Mary Hopkins.)

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(Enter Miss Dorothy Una Ratcliffe, with various quaint and charming country characters.)

MISS R. (shyly): I'm afraid I'm rather out of place among all these boisterous books. My "Dale Folk" (Lane, 10s. 6d.) are not without humour, it is true, but it is gentle comedy, not screaming farce.

MYSELF: You, and they, are very welcome.

(Enter Mr. Langford Reed, with "Sausages and Sundials," Jarrolds, 7s. 6d.)

MR. REED (sings):

"A little nonsense now and then
Is relished by the wisest men:
So wrote that gifted classic writer,
Through whom our literature is brighter,
Illustrious Anon."

(Enter a crowd of "Less Eminent Victorians," Peter Davies, 6s., from Woodcuts in THE LEISURE HOUR, THE QUIVER, and other Victorian periodicals. They are amusing and not unattractive to look at, but as each spouts a modern limerick, the effect is bewildering. They are followed immediately by Mr. H. M. Bateman with a large party of the amazing characters whom he creates; and as each of these is funnier than the last, and they all swarm out of his latest volume, "Rebound," Methuen, 10s. 6d., the result is uproarious. Finally, there enter "Bluejackets and Others," by Chas. Grave, Methuen, 7s. 6d., and these are in every way delightful; but nothing will stop them from singing, and the songs that they sing, "The Drunken Sailor," "Spanish Ladies," and many others, are to be found in "The Chelsea Song Book," collected and arranged for the piano by C. K. Scott, with drawings by Juliet Wigan, and calligraphy by Margaret Shipton, beautifully produced by the Cresset Press, 15s. This stirs the Less Eminent Victorians to sing also, and the songs that they sing are in "My Grandmother's Song Book," Gerald Howe, 4s. All is harmony, until a villainous-looking person creeps on with a book under his arm.)

THE V.-L. P.: This is the best Christmas present for politicians.

MYSELF: What is it called?

THE V.-L. P.: "Mr. Baldwin Explains, and other Dream Interviews," by Peter Ibbetson (Hogarth Press, 4s. 6d.).

MYSELF (indignantly): How dare you push your way in here? Do you think I'm going to advertise you? Get out! (I kick myself out.) Curtain.

PETER IBBETSON.



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A MIXED HAMPER

IN introducing his new book "The Charm of Cambridge" (A. & C. Black, 21s.), Mr. S. C. Roberts modestly claims no more than that he has written a few chapters to accompany Mr. W. G. Blackall's delicate etchings. He has done much more. He has written one of the best short guides to the Cambridge Colleges which has yet appeared. Amongst the hamper of Christmas gift books I commend this first, both for its pleasant illustrations and the lively nature of its original text.

This is the time for the making of sumptuous books, not necessarily for the collector, who may be baited all the year round, but for the buyer of Christmas presents who is about to pay his annual visit to Messrs. Hatchard, Bickers, and Bumpus. Books worthy to be reissued are reprinted in a more glorious form with new illustrations. Artists unearth their water-colours and have some flimsy letterpress written round them. There are original works, occasionally of worth, designed solely for the Christmas-tree. The jumble accumulates until it is a wise nephew who knows his own aunt, for in this column the books reviewed are of such a nature as kindly grown-ups may be supposed to give to each other.

Should she be fond of Paris the dear lady should be stunningly pleased with George and Pearl Adam's book about it ("A Book About Paris," Jonathan Cape, 12s. 6d.). It challenges comparison with Mr. Sisley Huddleston's pleasant volume upon the heels of which it so quickly follows, but it stands on its own legs as an interesting account of Parisian life from the point of view of the foreign resident and should be greatly valuable to those visitors who may be admitted to French family circles. It reiterates that comforting fallacy that the improprieties of Paris are entirely designed for and patronized by the foreign tourist. Have George and Pearl Adam, I wonder, ever been to a Parisian music-hall on a public holiday and seen the French bourgeoisie and its children staring, googly-eyed, at the naked ladies, and splitting their sides at the water-closet jokes? I am afraid the English and American trippers, with their morals temporarily blunted, do not explain everything. This book, it should be added, owes a great deal to its illustrator, Mr. Frank H. Waring.

One cannot really call Mr. A. H. Heath's "Sketches of Vanishing China" (Thornton Butterworth, 30s.) a book at all, despite its large quarto size and its resplendent yellow cover. It is no more than a portfolio with notes. Nor, I think, would the Marquess and Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair claim much originality for their rewritten Bible stories ("Women of the Bible," R.T.S., 25s.). What they have done for Mr. Harold Copping, Mr. Heath has done for himself, supplied very readable letterpress for a number of coloured illustrations. Both artists are straightforward in their method, and contribute to the Christmas counter what used to be called "a pretty book."

Another rehash of the Scriptures is Mr. Gerald Bullett's "Seed of Israel" (Gerald Howe, 10s. 6d.), rather rumly illustrated by Helen Kapp's woodcuts. This is an admirably produced book. Mr. Bullett has done his work, of selecting some of the best of the Bible tales, using the Authorized Version, most happily. But I do not think my Aunt would care about those woodcuts. I think she would prefer Mr. Copping.

Of two books which rely for illustration on reproductions of old prints, a new edition of Nimrod's "The Chace, The Road, and The Turf" (The Bodley Head, 16s.) is the most valuable. Nimrod remains the best sporting journalist we have ever had, and these three essays, written at Lockhart's request for the QUARTERLY REVIEW, have more than an antiquarian interest. If this edition, with its attractive coloured prints makes that turbulent author more widely known, it will have served its purpose. "Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals" (Routledge, 25s.), originally published in 1735, and also illustrated by contemporary prints, has been re-edited by Mr. A. L. Hayward. Most of the material, it is said, was taken from the papers of the Newgate Chaplains. It is a grim record, but a little too much an abbreviated dictionary of criminal biography to be of continuous interest.

Standing by itself in this list of Christmas books is "Songs from the Sea," from Rudyard Kipling's verse (Macmillan, 15s.). Here patently the success of the reprint must depend solely on the illustrator, for the selection, which is meagre, is also hackneyed. It says a good deal for Mr. Donald Maxwell that he has managed to make a short sixpennyworth look like fifteen shillings. His pictures are delightful in colouring and design, and are never monotonous. He is most successful when he is employing his quietest tones as in "The Wet Litany." The same artist is both author and illustrator of "Unknown Somerset" (Lane, 15s.); another charming Christmas present.

It has been thought worth while to translate from the German, Fritz Wittel's romance "The Jeweller of Bagdad" (Jonathan Cape, 7s. 6d.). This has been well done by Mr. F. H. Martens, and the book is illustrated by Miss Violet Brunton. It is a study of a morbid sex state, and its Eastern setting is purely incidental. It enables the author, however, to make the reactions of his peculiar hero less incredible. Not for aunts, and certainly not for nieces. It is pleasant to be able to welcome a new (limited) edition of Virginia Woolf's "Kew Gardens," handsomely produced, and decorated by Vanessa Bell (Hogarth Press, 15s.). Collectors of Mrs. Woolf's first editions should readily account for the five hundred copies of this present volume.

There remain two reprints of well-known Irish classics: W. B. Yeats's "Stories of Red Hanrahan and the Secret Rose," illustrated and decorated by Norah McGuinness (Macmillan, 10s. 6d.), and a *de luxe* edition of "The Playboy of the Western World" (George Allen & Unwin, 42s.), illustrated by John Keating, R.H.A. The new Synge is a magnificent volume, and Mr. Keating's water-colours have great power. Mr. Yeats's lesser-known stories are prefaced by a new poem, and Miss McGuinness's decorations are always interesting, if a little obscure in intention.

J. B. S. B.

LITTLE BOOKS

SERIES of little books, otherwise called pocket editions, are deservedly popular; the old series grow to immense size, and new ones are always springing up. Many of them are among the triumphs of modern publishing for cheapness and beauty of printing and binding. It is possible to welcome several newcomers this Christmas. Nothing could be better than "The Ormond Poets," edited by Mr. and Mrs. Cole, and published by Mr. Noel Douglas. Six volumes are published: the songs and verses from the plays of William Shakespeare, and selected poems of William Blake, Abraham Cowley, Shelley, Drayton, and Herrick. Print and paper are admirable, and they are very prettily bound in white paper at 1s. each, and in green cloth at 2s. Another pretty series is "Little Books," edited by Mr. Whibley, and published by Messrs. Peter Davies at 2s. each. They are tiny books, being Royal 32mo, which almost go in a waistcoat pocket, bound in pale pink, which is just a little ice-creamy. They are reprints of an extremely interesting kind, for the first six volumes now issued are Raleigh's "Instructions to his Sonne," Browne's "Urn-Buriall," Hale's "Discourse touching Provision for the Poor," Wright's "Country Conversations," Lord Halifax's "Character of King Charles II.," and Chesterfield's "Characters." Messrs. Gerald Howe, a new publisher, start a new series of a different kind, called "The Beginning of Things," bound in yellow cloth at 2s. 6d. Three of the early volumes are "New Year's Day," by S. H. Hooke, which deals with the history of the calendar; "Corn from Egypt," by Maurice Gompertz, which deals with the origins of agriculture; and "The Golden Age," by H. J. Massingham, which has as its subtitle "The Story of Human Nature."

From the large number of new volumes in the older series we can but select a few titles. In Messrs. Blackie's charming little "Wallet Library," 1s. 6d. each, there are four volumes of Poems, the poets being Byron, Blake, Herrick, and Milton. Blake appears again in "The World's Classics," in which series there is also Walton's "Lives," with an introduction by Professor Saintsbury (Oxford University Press, leather, 3s. 6d.; cloth, 2s.). In "Everyman's" (Dent, 2s. each) there is Mrs. Garnett's translation of Dostoevsky's "The Brothers

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BOOKS FOR BOYS

THINKING (perhaps a trifle too fondly) over the bookcase which held "Tom Cringle's Log" and "Mr. Midshipman Easy," "The Boy's Country Book" and "Buckland's British Fishes," "The Coral Island" and "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's," above all, the annual miscellanies of Routledge and Beeton, and the inimitable early volumes of "The Boy's Own Paper," we could not avoid a sense of departed glories. We reflected upon the wonderful standard of unselfishness, thoroughness, thoughtfulness, and good-humour presented to young susceptibility through these Victorian works with their admirable literary style, and their illustrations so choicely expressive and so unpretentious; we considered how noble, how constructive an education they had been in the homes of England, and what the nation owed to them in regard to the greatness of character displayed in the time of the breaking of nations; we compared them with the examples of contemporary books for boys awaiting our review, and these inevitably "were found wanting." To our mind, the sensationalism of the period has infected this class of literature among other valuable humanities; the breadth of mind, strength of character and quiet culture formerly combined in boys' classics are not generally operative. There is certainly an estimable workmanship in existence, and the *Maxima debetur pueris reverentia* is not expunged from our tablets, but on the whole the aim of the modern Ballantyne is to provide melodrama or changing-room wit, not much more. The books before us will be eagerly read by our boys, but we imagine that they will remain in the memory as Christmas presents and not as great experiences.

The nearest approach among these new books to the old quality is made by a tale of the Persian Gulf from the pen of Rear-Admiral T. T. Jeans, "Gunboat and Gun-Runner" (Blackie, 3s. 6d.). The writer has founded his pages on experience, and on a conviction that dignified and varied English is as much an element in a book for boys as in a book for men. The adventures of his hero Paul Martin in command of the armed launch "Bunder Abbas," well contrived in themselves, occur in a real Oriental atmosphere, and the reader's fancy is taken for a cruise along desert shores and lonely outposts. Sense and enterprise characterize also two Australian stories before us: Mr. W. M. Fleming's "Hunted Piccaninnies" (Dent, 6s.), with its scrub and creeks, aborigines and possums, black duck grilling over open wood fires, native vendetta and spirit of Anzac, is pleasing. Some natural history vignettes adorn this book. "The Mystery of Diamond Creek," by Mr. Alexander Macdonald (Blackie, 6s.), is explored among similar scenes, the author bringing to his work the attainments of a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and a talent for invention, yielding a tank-like motor to conquer the wilderness and subterranean death-pools infested with "blubbery monstrosities." Mr. Arthur Russell's "Dream Isle" (R.T.S., 2s. 6d.) may also satisfy the young idea looking for luck in these southern parts.

Then there are the books which naturally assemble themselves round "Treasure Island," of which an edition with porcelain-like pictures by Mr. Edmund Dulac, rapturously

distinct and yet a little too toyish for the story's strength, is ready (Benn, 15s.). Mr. Gerald Bullett has given a new turn to the tradition (his book has the inevitable chart in childish character and spelling) by producing an ancient mariner and a ship in a bottle. The ship is launched on the nearest pond by certain young navigators, and all the strange and romantic sea-business at once envelops their afternoon. It is "Cease thy bibble-babble, mannikin," and "Shall I broach 'ee with this curtle-axe?" cutlass and spyglass, dreams and songs from this beginning to the evening of a whimsical and sometimes beautiful tale. "Mutiny Island," by Mr. C. M. Bennett (Nisbet, 5s.), is not so metaphysical. Here we may touch on the Henry Morgans of the season, such as "The Laughing Pirate," by Mr. R. J. Macgregor (Richards Press, 6s.), a genial production with a capital central figure—we hear his loud laugh still—called Captain Warren. An inventive genius, he fails to obtain the sympathetic notice of the British Government, and in some choler he becomes a raider of the southern seas by means of a ship which can also take the air and the abyss. Two likely lads aged fifteen have the luck to go with him and to escape his fate. "The Terror of the Seas," by Mr. P. F. Westerman (Ward, Lock, 5s.), brings before us a more saturnine pirate, Captain Klinkov, whose redness is horrid, whose submarine and death-ray formidable—but he is no match at the finish for the British Navy. Mr. Westerman figures again among our entertainers as author of "Chums of the 'Golden Vanity'" (Blackie, 5s.), an ingenious blend of sailing-ship picturesqueness and modern mechanical rapidities; the sea resounds to such commands as "Haul taut reef tackles and bunt-lines," equally with technical mysteries, "Then why not gear the mag?" Mr. Bourne's "Coppernob, Second Mate" (Milford, 2s. 6d.) is stirring and hearty. Another book in this category and received as we go to press is "The Book of the Sea," by T. C. Bridges (Harrap, 7s. 6d.). Judging from a hurried survey it provides good and instructive reading for a boy of any age.

The Wild West is represented. Mr. E. E. Cowper gives it the appropriate treatment in "Hit the Trail" (Nelson, 5s.); we are back to the shack, the grizzlies, the .45 Colt, the venerable Indian chief with his "white brother," the language of Robert Service or thereabouts—the gaiety of youth may be assisted by this store of powerful expressions—"Dang my dingbats, I've a mind to smash you into pemmican, you blighted pijacker." (The shade of Cooper seems to recoil, a little offended.) "Jack the Young Ranchman" (Chambers, 3s. 6d.), is a kind of autobiography by Mr. G. B. Grinnell, with an old-style plainness of statement and experienced description. We may be out of touch with the modern boy, but we should be sorry to think this would not suit him in its degree. We turn from the Rockies to India in the company of Mr. John Budden, whose "Jungle John" (Longmans, 6s. 6d.) is an original plot evolved by the light of observed facts. "John smote that mighty tiger between the eyes," indeed, the legend of the frontispiece, might not allure us further, but apart from the gory pride of the hunter the book offers much curious and engaging natural history (recorded with vigour, as in the description of crocodiles at home), and is illustrated in the copious and modest tailpiece manner of a great tradition.

Returning from these peregrinations we try our luck among the school stories. Mr. Richard Bird's appear to be the wittiest of the selection—he is an agile paradoxer. In "Queer Doings at Aldborough" (Milford, 5s.) the mystery is the cousin to Mr. Wells's "Invisible Man"—a most respectable neighbourhood and school have to contend with a science master's parlour trick of changing people into walking suits of clothes. This is a good beginning, and Mr. Bird's enjoyment of it all is hilarious—in his own term we can only say "Lilph" as the headmaster, gown, mortar-board and all, splutters in the deep end of the baths, and two governors innocently join him. Mr. Bird has also written "The Moreleigh Mascot" (Blackie, 5s.), which we may again review in his own language, "What—ah—what is the meaning of this outrage?" stuttered the unfortunate house-master," or, more concisely, "Whoosh!" These frolics are more staidly followed by Mr. R. L. Bellamy's "Old Nick of Pig's" (R.T.S., 3s. 6d.), with its crew of mirth-producers, Secundus, the Rat, Monkey, Bunny, &c., its small talk ("old hoss" and "cheese it" variety), and a serious purpose

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discernible in some parts. Mr. H. Elrington's "The Manor School" (Nelson, 2s. 6d.) similarly presents the grand old ethic, "I will do my best, sir," through the round of practical jokes and school events.

The other group of boys' books to be noticed is the definitely instructive, and it is here that we see (again subject to the correction of the only real critics in this matter) most of the merit of modern writers for youth. "The World's Locomotives" (Boy's Own Paper, 5s.) is Mr. G. Gibbard Jackson's capable compilation of much expert knowledge and explanation, simple but valuable reading about engines past and present and throughout most of the world. The photographs are brilliant and numerous. Mr. P. M. Baker's "World of Machines" (Wells Gardner, 7s. 6d.) is a fluent account of the mechanical principles dominating our own august epoch—an account so clear that nobody except the present reviewer would fail to rise from it without understanding the soul of motor-cycles, mills, skyscrapers, electric irons, and a great deal else. Mr. Branch Johnson's "Fire-Fighting by Land, Sea, and Air" is a pleasant handbook (not so memorable perhaps as Ballantyne's "Fighting the Flames," but as sound in feeling): he has, we may venture, warmed to his subject, and gives a full measure of methods, adventures, curiosities, rules and regulations, practical suggestions and photographs. Mentioning flammenwerfer in the late war, he does not mention that the using of this dangerous beast was awarded as a punishment to German defaulters, who might be more unlucky in the consequence than the British opposite them. "Chemical Amusements and Experiments" (Seeley & Service, 5s.) is a *vade mecum* for young Shelleys by a veteran, Dr. Charles Gibson, almost as gently solemn as the once favourite "What is a Comet, Papa?" and worth acting upon. The holiday visit to the British Museum might be memorized by Mr. Mackenzie's "Babylon and Assyria" (Blackie, 1s. 6d.), a summary of the evidence of the Bible, Sayce, Layard, and other authorities, not overlooking the contacts of Babylon with familiar matters of to-day. We close our notes with a renewed thought of Routledge and Beeton, in connection with "The Oxford Annual for Scouts" (Milford, 3s. 6d.)—fact, fiction, song, natural history, things to make and do. This work under the editorship of Mr. Strang has established itself as an honourable and satisfying institution, though not as abundantly grateful to us as our old thick Christmas volumes.

BOOKS FOR GIRLS

It must be a Scrooge who can pass through the departments of a big store at Christmas time unmoved by the brightness and colour that are cleverly calculated to dazzle him. Here there are presents for everybody. But even the optimistic shopper soon finds that the alluring piles of gay sofa cushions, calendars, and crystallized fruits are something of a mirage: he has forgotten the colour of the room for the cushion, Uncle John hates calendars, and Aunt Jane is more crystallized than the fruits. Finally, he probably takes refuge in the book department, whose uniformity is soothing after the welter of useless "useful gifts." And the book department is not without brightness: he who seeks here presents for daughters and nieces must be attracted by the graceful bobbed and shingled heroines on the jackets of the girls' books, and spellbound by their promise of spirited adventure.

This Christmas there appears to be a specially generous allowance of school stories. The many to whom a new Angela Brazil is the event of the year are twice blessed, for she has produced two new stories of the familiar type—"A Popular Schoolgirl" (Blackie, 3s. 6d.) and "Ruth of St. Ronan's" (Blackie, 6s.). Christine Chaundler also has two new books, and in each there is an original idea well worked out. "Philippa's Family" (Nisbet, 3s. 6d.) deals with the difficulty of a good-natured girl in reconciling the claims of home and school, and parents who do not provide a quiet study for "prep." and yet expect good reports, may well take its lessons to heart. "Reforming the Fourth" (Ward, Lock, 5s.) describes almost painfully the relentless way in which schoolgirls can treat one another, and Penelope, the heroine, may be a little overdrawn; but the dialogue is

natural and amusing, and the story grips from beginning to end. Dimsie reappears with all her old charm in "Dimsie Goes Back," by D. F. Bruce (Oxford University Press, 5s.), and those who like to mix in royal circles may take their choice, for foreign princesses are the heroines in "The Princess of the Chalet School," by E. M. Brent-Dyer (Chambers, 3s. 6d.), and "Brenda of Beech House," by Dorothea Moore (Nisbet, 3s. 6d.). Both are bright and readable, if rather improbable. May Baldwin lays the plot of "Rooni" (Chambers, 3s. 6d.) in the South of France. It is an unusual and interesting book, and Rooni is an impressive heroine, whose efforts to create goodwill in the school at Nice are crowned with success. But zoology may protest at her receiving "a beautiful gold frame containing the school group, and above it a dove holding an olive branch in its hand" (*sic*)! "Varvara comes to England," by Winifred Darch (Oxford University Press, 5s.), "A Thrilling Term at Janeways," by E. M. Brent-Dyer (Nelson, 5s.), and "Jean Plays Her Part," by May Wynne (Religious Tract Society, 3s. 6d.), can all be recommended. "The Small Sixth Form," by Evelyn Smith (Blackie, 5s.), contains little plot, but some capital character drawing, and is decidedly amusing. The surprise of the year is supplied by Bessie Marchant. It is difficult to believe that a practised pen could produce a book so poor in plot and execution, and so badly punctuated, as "The Two New Girls" (Warne, 2s. 6d.).

Some may regard the school story as a 'bus driver's holiday, and the girl of varied interests will turn with pleasure to the Annuals, which are unusually good this year. "Blackie's Girls' Annual" (Blackie, 5s.) contains, besides stories and verse by the best known girls' writers, well-illustrated articles on basket making, cricket, rearing caterpillars, a holiday in Iceland, and a modestly written account of a woman's journey by motor from the Cape to Cairo by Mrs. Court Treatt. "The Oxford Annual for Girls" (Oxford University Press, 5s.) is full of good stories, and, as usual, has a very pretty cover. "The First Trail of the Girl Guides" (Basil Blackwell, 6s.) has a coloured photograph of Princess Mary in uniform and a message from her, an article by the Chief Guide, and a characteristic poem by Rudyard Kipling to give the Guide flavour, and the whole of the well-produced volume will, no doubt, be gladly devoured by every member of the wonderful Association. Good ideas and humour abound in "Twenty-six Ethel Talbot Stories for Girls" (Religious Tract Society, 3s. 6d.). A quite wonderful six-shillingsworth for younger children is "Number Five Joy Street" (Basil Blackwell). Charming coloured illustrations and a beautiful cover and end papers, together with well-printed prose and verse, make this a volume to be prized and kept. "Crosswinds Farm," by E. E. Cowper (Chambers, 2s. 6d.), and "Juanita, a Story of the Moors in Spain," by Ierne Plunket (Oxford University Press, 2s. 6d.), are both good yarns.

"The Laughing Giant and Other Fairy Stories," by Lily M. Davis (Selwyn & Blount, 10s. 6d.), is a rather misleading title. Fairy stories they certainly are, and they contain some charming ideas, but there is a good deal that will escape the child. We doubt whether children will like E. Temple Thurston's new and rather affected versions of Bible and historical stories in "Come and Listen" (Putnam, 7s. 6d.), but the pictures by Flora Twort are charming. A more solid exposition of religious subjects is "Sabbath Spice and Festival Fare," by Dr. Feldman (Routledge, 3s. 6d.), a series of simple talks about the Jewish festivals and the meaning of their observance.

Looking over the piles of new books, we are struck by the excellence of their get-up and illustrations; and the majority hold the promise of a few pleasantly spent hours. But how many will be or deserve to be read and read again? How many will be welcomed in years to come as the charming edition of Mrs. Ewing's "Six to Sixteen" (G. Bell, 2s.) is welcomed to-day?

A "real live" girl of sixteen has helped to produce a book that every other girl should long to possess and place on her permanent bookshelf. The illustrations by Jacynth Parsons to Blake's "Songs of Innocence" (Medici Society, 12s. 6d.) are astonishingly beautiful, and the book is finely printed. W. B. Yeats writes an interesting and restrained introductory letter. We feel like him: there is not much to be said. The pictures must be seen—and felt.

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Broke a handsome china basin
Placed upon the mantelsheif."

So begins "Grandmamma's Book of Rhymes for Children" (Oxford University Press, 7s. 6d.), and everyone will admit that it is a good beginning. The promise is fully maintained; these Victorian verses of Mrs. Elizabeth Turner are charming, full of delicate and spritely verse, with the moral tucked inside each like the motto in a cracker. They were well worth reprinting, and Maud Reed Cooper's illustrations are delightfully appropriate. Another good book of verse is Elizabeth Fleming's "Gammon and Spinach" (Collins, 5s.), illustrated by Hugh Chesterman, it has a particularly pleasant rough green cover with a golden owl on it. "Fiddlesticks" (Diamond Press, 5s.), by David Naylor, illustrated by Ian Hassell, is in the nonsense tradition of Edward Lear. "Songs for Michael," by Fred Weatherley, K.C. (Heath Cranton, 4s. 6d.), are more sophisticated, and "The Littlest One," by Marion St. John Webb (Harrap, 7s. 6d.), is frankly sentimental, imitations of baby talk might be supposed to appeal more to one kind of grown-up than to children. "Proud Sir Pim," on the other hand, written and illustrated by Hugh Chesterman, and published by Basil Blackwell at 3s. 6d., is very robust, somewhat in the Belloc manner, and truly entertaining. People who have still to learn their nursery rhymes should be provided with Ethel Everett's collection (Jack, 5s.). The version given of "Hark, hark, the dogs do bark," is not the best one, and "Humpty-Dumpty" has been left out, otherwise it is excellent. The verses in "Cockadoodledont," by E. H. W. Meyerstein (Cecil Palmer, 2s. 6d.), are less facile than the ordinary run of children's verse, and have an individuality and a kind of detachment which is attractive. "Mr. Skiddlewinks" (Chambers, 3s. 6d.), by Edith E. Millard, illustrated by Harry B. Nielson, is a story in verse, and the pictures are the right kind for colouring in the home. "The New Bonzo Book" (Partridge, 2s. 6d.) has Bonzo both in verse and prose, and, of course, in pictures.

"The Wonderful Journey" (7s. 6d.), by Cyril W. Beaumont, printed by the author, and illustrated by Wyndham Payne, is a delightful book, both in matter and appearance. The author and artist, between them, have succeeded in expressing the very spirit of toys at Christmas time. "The Ark Book," by Freda Derrick (Blackie, 3s. 6d.), is another happy achievement, the pictures, especially of life in the Ark, are full of interesting detail. "Stories Barry Told Me" (Longmans, Green, 6s.), by Eva Pain, has cheerful coloured pictures by Mrs. Bernard Darwin. "The Hepzibah Hen," by Olwen Bowen, illustrated by L. R. Brightwell (Ernest Benn, 3s. 6d.), is about talking animals—Reginald Rat, Cuthbert Cockerel, and so on. "Queer Beasts at the Zoo," by Gladys Davidson, pictures by Dorothy Burroughs (George Allen & Unwin, 2s.), imparts information on porcupines, giraffes, and kangaroos in an interesting way. "The Lost Merbaby," by Margaret and Mary Baker (Werner Laurie, 3s. 6d.), is a fanciful tale with illustrations in silhouette. "Pamela's Teddy Bears" (Jack, 2s. 6d.), by Mrs. H. C. Cradock is a good story of a nursery game. "The Katy Kruse Dolly Book" (Harrap, 5s.) has vivacious illustrations of dolls and dolls' houses and amusing verses by Rose Fyleman. "Told Again," by Walter de la Mare (Basil Blackwell, 7s. 6d.), has a subtitle: "Old Tales Retold for Children"—and a similar book, "A Treasury of Tales for Little Folks," is edited by Marjory Bruce (Harrap, 5s.). But surely "Dick Whittington" and "Cinderella" and "Jack and the Beanstalk" have been told to children for centuries? Perhaps it is an unworthy conservatism which makes one prefer the old laconic versions, but it does seem as if the wealth of new detail destroys the great moment which the enjoyment lies in waiting for in each story. For instance, when Fatima and her sister are made into lifelike ordinary girls, the "Sister Ann, Sister Ann, do you see anybody coming?" piece passes off just like the rest of the tale, and one feels cheated.

Next, the Annuals. Well, here are the Annuals: "Chatterbox" and "The Prize" (Wells Gardner & Darton, "Chatterbox," 5s. and 7s. 6d.; "The Prize," 2s. 6d., or in

cloth 3s.); "The Wonder Book" (Ward, Lock, 6s.); "The Oxford Annual for Baby" (Oxford University Press, 3s. 6d.). Children have their favourites, but to the grown-up eye it seems very much six of one and half a dozen of the other. "Chatterbox" and "The Prize," the oldest of all, and the plainest in appearance, seem to present the greatest variety of contents, but the others also offer a handsome choice.

Messrs. Dean, according to their custom, issue a generous selection of painting books, and they have, among many others, two cheerful books on engines and ships and aeroplanes ("On the Move," 3s. 6d., and "By Rail and Road," 2s.).

OLD FRIENDS

CHRISTMAS is a time for thinking of old friends, even among books. And the publishers send them out to us in the most festive of dresses. What a pleasure it is to see our old friend "Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia," by the great Samuel Johnson, beautifully dressed in marbled paper, and reintroduced to us by Mr. R. W. Chapman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 7s. 6d.; limited edition, 21s.). At the age of nine we were given "Rasselas" to read by an eccentric tutor, whose eccentricity now seems to have been wisdom. Another Eastern tale, also of a "pure morality," is "The History of Nour-jahad," by Mrs. Sheridan, which was first published in 1767. It is now republished in a pretty purple and red and gold binding with coloured illustrations (Elkin Mathews, 8s. 6d.).

Then there are the poets. The Nonesuch Press have not often produced anything more distinguished than their "The Temple," by George Herbert (edition limited to 1,500 copies, £1 11s. 6d.). The brocaded cover and red-ruled page give it a remarkable appearance. A lesser poet, but one worth reprinting, is resuscitated in "The Poems of John Philips," in "The Percy Reprints" (Oxford: Blackwell, 8s. 6d.). Philips's three poems, "The Splendid Shilling," "Blenheim," and "Cyder," were all published between 1701 and 1707, and won him a memorial in Westminster Abbey. They are reprinted with the minor poems in this volume with an introduction and notes by M. G. Lloyd Thomas. Then there are three new volumes in the Clarendon Press's beautiful facsimile reprints, bound in marbled paper: Collins's "Ode occasioned by the Death of Mr. Thomson" (5s.), Johnson's "The Vanity of Human Wishes" (5s. 6d.), and Gray's "Elegy" (3s. 6d.). The most remarkable facsimile reprint series is, however, the Noel Douglas Replicas, which reproduce by photography at very low prices rare editions of famous books. "John Keats: Poems, 1820," and the first edition of Fitzgerald's "Omar Khayyam" are new volumes, respectively 8s. and 4s. 6d. Even more charming are the first octavo edition of Browne's "Urn Burial" (9s.), and Milton's "Areopagitica" (4s. 6d.).

The Bodley Head have produced a very handsome edition of Urquhart and Motteux's "Rabelais" in two volumes (50s.). The binding and paper are admirable, but we do not think that Mr. Papé's illustrations improve the text. It is a pity that publishers who show such taste in the technical production of books should so often disfigure them by unnecessary illustrations. We say that, despite the fact that according to Mr. May, who edits these volumes, the man who does not appreciate Mr. Papé is "a subject for compassion."

The "curious" book is nearly always worth reprinting. Mr. Gerald Howe has found a good one in "Gerard's Herball: or Generall historie of Plantes," the Essence thereof distilled by Marcus Woodward from the Edition of Th. Johnson, 1636 (21s.). Mr. Woodward has done the distilling well, and this old gardening book should delight many gardeners of to-day. Another curious book, from the eighteenth century this time, is "Tricks of the Town" (21s.), which is a reprint of three tracts: "Tricks of the Town laid open, or a Companion for Country Gentlemen," 1747; "A Trip through the Town," 1735; and "A Trip from St. James's to the Exchange," 1744. These tracts owe their origin undoubtedly to Ned Ward's famous "The London Spy"; they are not nearly as good as that book, but they are worth reading. Messrs. Chapman & Hall, the publishers, have made a handsome volume of them.

Whether it is irreverent to call "The Apocrypha" an old friend, we do not know, but we are delighted to see that



GEOFFREY BLES

By a conspicuous exercise of self-restraint, I abstain from employing the phrase "Christmas Gift Books"; but I may mention that books can be given as presents in this hilarious and dyspeptic season, and I want to tell you about my interesting publications of this Autumn.

"FILMS: FACTS AND FORECASTS" (21s. net), by L'ESTRANGE FAWCETT, the Dramatic and Film Critic of *The Morning Post*, has had an excellent Press. Mr. Arnold Palmer, in *The Sphere*, says: "If there is a better book on the films, I don't know it"; Mr. St. John Ervine gave a two-column review in *The Observer* to "This very informative book"; and Mr. James Agate, in *The Daily Chronicle*, calls it "an admirable book." So there is not much left for the Publisher to say!

After the success of GEORGE DILNOT's previous book, "SCOTLAND YARD," I anticipated a big demand for his new book, "GREAT DETECTIVES" (16s. net). I have not been disappointed. The reviewers, too, have all praised this lucid and interesting account of many of the most mysterious cases in criminology—the masterly investigation of Dr. Locard in the murder of Marie Latelle; the careful preparation of the case against the "Brides in the Bath" murder; the exploits of the great American detective Pinkerton, etc., etc.

RICHARD HALLIBURTON's "THE GLORIOUS ADVENTURE" (16s. net) has had as big a success as this author's "ROYAL ROAD TO ROMANCE." *The Spectator*, reviewing this fascinating travel book of the Mediterranean, says: "This book is a joy, and none but a man with the fine true instincts of a poet could have written it."

Have you seen "BRIGHTER FRENCH" (For Bright Young People who already know some) (5s. net)? However good your knowledge of French may be, I think you will discover in this amusing little book a large number of idiomis and up-to-date colloquialisms which are new to you—but it is not intended for the use of schools!

My Autumn novels are "going strong," and every week brings very satisfactory repeat orders from the big Libraries. Apparently my opinion of my Fiction list is shared by others, for in *Truth* a few weeks ago I found that encouraging statement, "Most of us know by this time that a Bles novel is pretty sure to be a good one."

"THE ROMANTIC TRAGEDY," by F. E. MILLS YOUNG, and "WHAT WOMEN FEAR," by FLORENCE RUDELL, are amongst the season's "best sellers." HENRY BAERLEIN's "MARIPOSA ON THE WAY" has had most excellent notices in *Punch* and elsewhere; and LILIAN ROGERS' fine novel, "THE ROYAL CRAVATTS" (a curious title!) has been praised by the *Times Literary Supplement* as "an exceptionally thoughtful and sympathetic study of a family of Jewish emigrants in New York." (The noble army of "listeners-in" will remember the enthusiastic praise accorded to this novel by Mrs. Hamilton in her talk on New Novels.)

Have you read that fine little book, "THE HUMAN TOUCH" (3s. 6d. net), by PHILIP INMAN? Its big success shows how keenly interested we all are in the work of our great hospitals. As Lord Knutsford wrote, "Very blessed is the man who can observe hospital life, as Mr. Philip Inman has done."

P.S.—No! I had not really forgotten "P'S AND Q'S" (5s. net), the new method of telling character from handwriting. You just take a specimen of handwriting (your own or your worst enemy's), submit it to 15 tests, based on the leading works on Graphology, note the results, refer to a key-index—and out comes the character, which in 90% cases is perfectly accurate. Do ask your bookseller to show you this book—it is quite fascinating and likely to be a craze before long.

Of course, "P'S AND Q'S" will make a very jolly Christmas present; so too will KAREL CAPEK's famous book "LETTERS FROM ENGLAND" in its new 3s. 6d. edition; and "BRIGHTER FRENCH," of which a Third Edition is now printing.

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RALPH STRAUS in the *Bystander*: "Mightily amusing, particularly if you read them aloud. Personally I have read the dreadful story of Gladys Conk and the Robber to all my visitors, and we have rolled helplessly about. . . . It is unspeakable joy. A book to be bought for birthdays or Christmases or any other sort of convivial celebration."

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it is becoming common to reprint apocryphal books in a form suitable for Christmas presents. The Bodley Head have produced a fine "Ecclesiasticus" (25s.), though here again the coloured illustrations are a mistake. Messrs. Philip Allan publish "The Book of Tobit" (10s. 6d.), prettily bound and well printed. The illustrations in this book are much better, being reproductions of such famous pictures as Bellini's "Saint Jerome" and Raphael's "La Madonna detta del Pesce."

ART BOOKS

Leonardo the Florentine. By RACHEL ANNAND TAYLOR. (Richards. 31s. 6d.)

Paolo Veronese. By P. H. OSMOND. (Sheldon Press. 25s.)

Design in the Theatre. (The Studio. 10s. 6d. and 7s. 6d.)

The Painted Glass of York. By F. HARRISON. (S.P.C.K. 12s. 6d.)

Iron and Brass Implements of the English House. By J. SEYMOUR LINDSAY. (Medici Society. 25s.)

English and Irish Glass. By W. A. THORPE. (Medici Society. 17s. 6d.)

The Book of Kells. By SIR EDWARD SULLIVAN. (The Studio. 30s.)

E. A. Verpillieux. By MALCOLM SALAMAN. (The Studio. 5s.)

William Walcot, R.E. By MALCOLM SALAMAN. (The Studio. 5s.)

MRS. RACHEL ANNAND TAYLOR calls her book on Leonardo a "study in personality": she aims not so much at giving an account or a criticism of Leonardo's work as a picture of the times in which he lived, of the courts of the Medici, the Sforzas, the Borgias, of the social life of the day with its magnificence, its intrigues, its savagery, and its love of art, and running through all this, a psychological study of Leonardo's development both as man and artist, and of his activities as painter, engineer, and savant. It is only a pity that so much useful information, founded, obviously, on patient and profound research and a scholarly knowledge of the subject, should be served up in a literary style of a grandiose and jewelled ornateness worthy almost of the Borgias themselves. The scope of Mr. Osmond's "Paolo Veronese" is different. It has no pretensions to being a work of literature on its own merits, but is a clear and straightforward account of the career and work of the painter who took his name from his native city of Verona, but is known as one of the greatest masters of the school of Venice, where he settled early in life and where most of his best work was accomplished. Mr. Osmond gives a detailed historical study of Veronese's development, and is a discriminating critic, not fearing to point out the occasional failures and weaknesses of his subject. The ninety-five illustrations are not very satisfactory from the point of view of reproduction, conveying but poorly the subtleties of tone which are so essential a part of Veronese's painting. The book contains a useful catalogue of his works.

"Design in the Theatre" contains commentaries on British theatrical designers by Mr. George Sheringham and on Continental theatrical designers by Mr. James Laver, with contributions also by Messrs. Gordon Craig, Charles B. Cochran, and Nigel Playfair. The numerous and extremely interesting illustrations include examples of stage design of all types from realist to surrealist in England, America, and the Continent. The English section of the illustrations goes to prove that it is not from lack of interesting designers in this country, but, one can only conclude, from the unenterprising nature of managers (who, in turn, would no doubt blame the conservative public) that we see so little here in the way of original theatrical design.

Mr. Harrison's "Painted Glass of York" adds another volume to the "Historic Monuments of England" series. Mr. Harrison, who is librarian of the Dean and Chapter Library, York, has written an excellent handbook, historical as well as descriptive, of the unique mediæval glass to be found in York Minster and the various parish churches of the city. His book is well illustrated, and at the end is included a valuable summary, very clearly arranged, giving the contents of each window so far as these can be read. It is thus useful both to the student of glass and to the casual visitor.

Mr. Seymour Lindsay's is the only comprehensive English work on the subject of domestic implements of iron

and brass. It is divided into six sections: the hearth and all implements connected with the fireplace; cooking and other kitchen utensils; utensils employed for purposes of artificial light; for tobacco-smoking; miscellaneous; and a section on American-Colonial metalwork. Mr. Lindsay traces the history of such implements from the earliest known examples, and the book is profusely illustrated with drawings by him, largely from examples in his own collection. Mr. W. A. Thorpe, who writes on English and Irish glass, is in the department of Ceramics at the Victoria and Albert Museum. His book, though from its limitations of length necessarily incomplete, forms an excellent introduction to the study of a fascinating subject. He deals with it from the historical and technical points of view, with the various influences, particularly the Venetian, which helped in its formation, and the book should be of great assistance as regards identification of period or style to anyone who is forming a collection. It is admirably illustrated in colour and in monochrome.

"The Studio" has published a third edition of Sir Edward Sullivan's study of "The Book of Kells," with twenty-four excellent coloured plates of reproductions from this famous manuscript, the original of which is in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. The origin and date of the manuscript are uncertain, and it is not even proved that it was made at the monastery of Kells from which it takes its name. Sir Edward Sullivan attributes it, tentatively, to the latter part of the ninth century. In a preface to this edition he deals with recent important publications and theories on the subject. Two more books published by "The Studio" are "E. A. Verpillieux," in the "Masters of the Colour Print" series, and "William Walcot," in the "Masters of Etching" series, both with introductions by Mr. Malcolm Salaman.

GEORGIAN GLORIES

Poetry To-Day. By IOLO A. WILLIAMS. (Jenkins. 2s. 6d.)

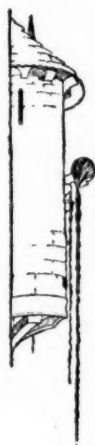
Oxford Poetry, 1927. Edited by W. H. AUDEN and C. DAY-LEWIS. (Oxford: Blackwell. 3s. 6d.)

Cursory Rhymes. By HUMBERT WOLFE. (Benn. 6s.)

SINCE even poetry belongs to this world, and has had a history, one may escape being called a misanthropist or a pedant if one begins considering modern verse by glancing away from it to the verse of a century ago. What is the test of poetry? Its effect: and that effect is registered in the degree to which it is remembered and quoted, not deliberately and on those occasions devoted to poetical scrutiny and debate, but in the ordinary way. Looking over the journals and the prose of the Waterloo period and afterwards in England, or the scrapbooks and albums then so religiously kept, one must be impressed by the contact of recent verse with the general mind. Probably we should smile at the favour given to the Scotts, Campbells, Moores, Montgomerys, and others whose inspiration had not too much divine or Satanic tint in it, but the significant thing is that they captured and they long held their world; they expressed the feelings and opinions of many people in such a way that they were a public force. As for the rarer and deeper genius of the time, that too was recognized with confidence by a smaller circle, and its great lines and stanzas, the same which we choose to-day, unerringly stamped themselves on the spirit of men of culture. There was little doubt or delay; if Keats wrote an outstanding "Ode to Autumn," it was quoted in the Chester or Stamford newspapers a month later, it went into the naturalists' miscellanies in a year or so, and lines and fragments from it were taken over by the essayists. The country as a whole had a faith for poetry, and an eye for the classic ripeness which is at once so easy and so inaccessible.

Such evidences naturally blossoming by the wayside would be impossible to gather from the literature of this time not explicitly connected with poetry. We have curiosity, but not confidence; we pick and choose, we range and preen, but we are not compelled. All our anthologies have not succeeded in scattering the perfume and petals of our lyrists through the daily prose of the writing community; few great

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lines have established themselves on the flyleaves of the old quotation books; names of poets are commonly repeated, but not poems. Having given this opinion on the status of poetry in the modern consciousness, we must introduce the simple survey of Mr. Iolo Williams, himself the author of delicate rhyme, by saying that he is of quite another mind. "England," he concludes, "has surely cause to be proud of her poets to-day, and to feel that the art which they practise is one in which she is in no immediate danger of losing her established eminence." We might still press our question about the effect of poetry and whether that is to be held a satisfying generation of poets which does not profoundly write its beauties on the heart of the public, but at all events Mr. Williams has responded to a great many of the best utterances since the Yellow Book. He attributes the Georgian movement to the example of Professor Housman: "there was in 'A Shropshire Lad' the flash of something sharp, and bright, and rich, which was the very thing . . . needed to set England off on a new era of poesy." He expounds some of the Georgians, Brooke, Mr. Drinkwater, Mr. de la Mare, Mr. Davies, Mr. Hodgson; at this last name we interrupt the list to protest against the repetition of an old heresy. Mr. Williams maintains that "The Song of Honour" is "too close a parallel, both metrically and in tone, to Christopher Smart's 'Song to David' to rank as a major achievement." The parallel is superficial. Smart's poem is a rhapsody, largely Oriental in image and phrase, and owes much to the mystical parts of the Bible; Mr. Hodgson's work is a direct, single, and English-coloured record of experience. But we cannot extend such annotations on issues which will not prevent Mr. Williams's cheerful handbook from increasing the prevalent desire to know what is going on among the bards.

Desiring to know what has been going on among the Oxford poets, and promising ourselves a fine free reverie upon the high fancies and solemn tourneyings of young intensity, we were disappointed; for the editors have written a preface so corrugated, so psychologically portentous, that we thought of Dante's gloomiest line. Abandoning hope, we nevertheless entered, and were duly confronted with Beëlzebub's "indigo oppressive thighs," green slugs calling, potbellied homunculi, glass-eyed goats, and squawking universes. The alkali of Mr. Wolfe's new collection of middle-class tit-bits, the children's hour, grown-ups reckoned as children—all Paradise in a lemon-squash—scarcely relieved the strong sense of something burning.

CHINA AND THE WEST

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Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary. By DR. SUN YAT SEN. (Hutchinson, 10s. 6d.)

The Chinese Puzzle. By ARTHUR RANSOME. (Allen & Unwin, 5s.)

MR. BAKER has applied his intimate knowledge of China and the Chinese to a problem which occupies the thoughts of all who have seen the country, and had the privilege of knowing its people. Are the ethical principles of Chinese civilization an obstacle to industrial development; do they impede the working of the representative and judicial institutions of a modern State? After subjecting the question to a very searching analysis, Mr. Baker decides that Chinese family life, and the code of public and private morals engendered by it, are definite obstacles to a successful adaptation of Western modes of life and government. Representative institutions are useless unless the population governed by them is accustomed to accept the decisions of the majority; judicial institutions, as we understand them, are organizations for investigating facts scientifically, and assessing responsibilities. The Chinese have never connected authority with representation; and their ethical code has given their judicial institutions a very peculiar character. No Chinaman of decent feeling can testify against parents, relatives, or friends in either a civil or a criminal case; and as a result, Chinese justice is simply a system of settlement. The equitable magistrate gives judgment in favour of the poor plaintiff, and against the rich defendant, because a rich man can and ought to compensate a poor one; a less equit-

able judge will give judgment from personal motives, a corrupt one in favour of the best payer. In no case are there any grounds of complaint; the judgment has settled the question. At no period of Chinese history has a judge or magistrate ever administered justice by investigating facts and applying law. His code of morals forbids it. The mere introduction and promulgation of civil and criminal codes will make little difference to methods of judicial administration that are centuries old, and are, moreover, necessary corollaries to Chinese social customs.

What Mr. Baker calls the dead hand of tradition weighs equally heavily upon industrial development. Chinese Labour leaders and the organizers of Chinese industry will always be selected from the scholar class. Chinese respect for learning forbids that anybody with authority over others should merely be a man who has mastered a trade, or become intimate with the details of a profession. Mr. Baker has little difficulty in showing that a Chinese graduate will never be a successful competitor against men of the Ford and Carnegie type, even though he has added a superficial acquaintance with Todhunter's geometry to his more intimate knowledge of the ten classics. He concludes his long and valuable survey of Chinese life with the verdict that no final reorganization of the Government can be effected for years to come.

Mr. Baker may be right: Chinese history records long periods of depression and chaos. He may also be correct when he says that the Chinese, to whom the old code of morals and conduct is a rule of life, cannot direct or control the machinery of a modern State. He likens them to the old squires of the southern States, whose sons found it convenient to change the manners of a southern country house for the habits of a New York business office. Yet Mr. Baker should take care lest his admiration for industry, railways, and telephones—which he admits is great—tempts him to write and think like a Western barbarian. China has redeemed as many nations from savagery as Europe; Chinese morals and habits of life have produced men who, as Mr. Baker admits, were the admiration of all who met and knew them. If our industrial revolution destroys this ancient civilization, and creates conditions of life in which the finest products of Chinese society have no place, then we, the pioneers and artisans of that revolution, will have the moral obligation of replacing the civilization that we have destroyed, the type of man that we have obliterated, by substitutes of equal value. We shall not find it easy.

Dr. Sun Yat Sen's book is in two quite distinct sections. In one he describes the growth of the Chinese revolution; in the other he explains his political philosophy. The chapters on the revolution leave no doubt that Dr. Sun Yat Sen was a sincere and honest patriot; but they are extremely bald. Not a word is said about what we should have liked to know—his early life in a Chinese family, his first contact with European habits of life, his first impressions of Europe. Dr. Sun Yat Sen was evidently too proud and too modest to write of himself; we may admire his restraint, but we are bound to regret it. Dr. Sun Yat Sen's political philosophy is strictly orthodox. His first chapter is written to prove that money is a medium of exchange; his second and third chapters are written in refutation of the Chinese philosopher who maintained that knowledge was easy and action difficult. This maxim, which is accepted for truth by millions of Chinese is responsible for China's stagnation:—

"Therefore I consider myself bound to win the minds of my fellow countrymen and women away from the preconceived idea that has taken root in them that knowledge is easy but action difficult, and to the idea that action is easy but knowledge is difficult, by means of repeated explanations and proofs. . . . If my work is successful the future of China will be bright and our country will in a short time take its place amongst the mighty world powers of to-day."

We cannot be quite so confident about this excellent panacea. It reads rather like the operation order of the Chinese admiral entitled "The seven infallible rules for utterly defeating the Western barbarians." None the less, we have no particular objection to it; and we do quite honestly think that Dr. Sun Yat Sen's objections to Wang Yuan Ming are simply irrefutable. It is far more difficult to draw an architect's plan (knowledge) than to work as a

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bricklayer (action). The seven additional proofs, drawn from a consideration of "building fortifications, digging canals, electricity, chemistry, and evolution" are equally sound.

It would be interesting to know what impression the Chinese edition of this work—we assume that there is one—makes upon Dr. Sun Yat Sen's compatriots. An old Chinese graduate of Han lin once told the reviewer that a perfect prose composition would be like a "regular succession of melodious gong strokes." The reviewer—whose parents had taught him to appreciate fugues, sonatas, and symphonies—thought that this would be rather monotonous. It occurred to him, however, that in Chinese, Dr. Sun Yat Sen's refutation of Wang Yuan Ming, and his ten irrefutable proofs that knowledge is difficult and action easy, might very much resemble a succession of gong strokes, which might conceivably be thought melodious. He sincerely hopes so, for then "the future of China will be bright, and she will shortly take her place amongst the mighty world Powers of to-day."

Mr. Arthur Ransome's book upon the "Chinese Puzzle" does not make it less puzzling; but it is, at least, the work of a shrewd observer. He is persuaded that those Chinese who have come under European influence are the *de facto* representatives of the Chinese nation; and that their political aims are the only aims with which we have to reckon. His conclusion that the old relations between China and the Western Powers need revision, is not original; and we may doubt whether foreign communities in China would be as safe without military protection, as he seems to imagine. Nor does he prove, that, by withdrawing this protection, we should do anything to assist the Chinese to restore order in their own country. None the less the book is a good corrective to the hot-headed nonsense talked by old residents in China, and the exaggerations of the Bund Press.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

All About Animals. By LILIAN GASK. Illustrated by W. BOND. (Harrap. 7s. 6d.)

This is an inexpensive and extremely interesting book for boys and girls by an author who has the gift of recording stories of animal life so attractively that young readers are always anxious for more. The descriptions of the various animals are arranged in alphabetical order and, therefore, any child may quickly satisfy its "desire to know" about any of the two hundred animals included. There are numerous illustrations from photographs, all of which are admirably reproduced.

The Children's Book of Wildflowers and the Story of their Names. By GARETH H. BROWNING. Illustrated by M. C. POLLARD. (Chambers. 10s. 6d.)

Miss Browning has supplied a book suitable for boys and girls of all ages, which most children will welcome with delight. Not only does she describe in simple language the wildflowers and where they are to be found, but she also tells us in pleasing stories their history; why the flowers are called by their names, where the names come from, and who first made them up. Each flower—and the origin of over sixty is given—has a separate chapter and a fine illustration in colour.

The Rights of Mallaroché. By C. NINA BOYLE. (Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.)

In a breezy "word with the reader," Miss Boyle again draws attention to the fascination exercised by islands. There are islands, it appears, in English waters, beyond English law. These islands are completely subjected to the rule of their owners, who may legally enforce a feudal code of laws. Such is Mallaroché, off the Welsh coast, and its owner, Delamaraye, a South African, is not one to forgo his proprietary rights. He uses Mallaroché as a base for bootlegging and for the smuggling of tobacco into England. He also keeps his sister Reneira a close prisoner in his Norman manor-house, intending to force her into a marriage with Yelton, a murderous American pirate. He even goes as far as to chain up and flog his African servants. But Delamaraye is not a villain. He is only a bumptious colonial, charmingly simple, out to marry a girl of incontestable aristocracy. The trouble begins when Mrs. Ballastier forces Delamaraye to entertain her and her husband on Mallaroché. She resolves to rescue Reneira, but she bungles

the rescue and finds herself captive in the island. Mimic war is waged. Romance rides high. One chapter is called "The Hanging on Lee Boulders." But, as a matter of fact, the writer has more zest than capacity for romance. However, her characters are passably well drawn, her situations are well realized, there are some horrible touches. She has the right spirit.

Savour of Salt. By FLORENCE RANDAL LIVESAY. (Dent. 6s.)

In a series of closely connected sketches Miss Livesay writes of an Irish settlement in Ontario. Her book is packed with information. It should be most welcome and useful to those interested in folk lore and peasant superstitions. To the outsider, it would seem that the Irish who emigrated and founded rural communities lost nothing of their characteristic mode of thought and feeling in the transition. In this they bear some resemblance to the French-Canadians depicted so differently, so sternly, in Louis Hémon's "Maria Chapdelaine." It may be remarked that Miss Livesay, like Louis Hémon, dwells on the antagonism towards the town which seems to exist in a transplanted European peasantry. And in her book, as in his, mention of the cities gives us our bearings as to time (a significant point), and affords us some relief. She has a readable account of the customs and beliefs, the domestic economy and the quaint legends, of her Irish-Canadians. There are, for instance, descriptions of May Day and a burial wake. It would appear that to go to a neighbour's house and receive food without asking for it and eat it without thanking her is one cure for whooping cough. All this is pleasantly worked in with the story of Aine's childhood and her love for Van Bradburn. Auntie McCool, Ma Finnigan, and Father O'Shea are well drawn. Aine and Beatrice are cleverly contrasted. Miss Livesay manages, although in jerks, to get her story told.

The House of Lost Identity. By DONALD CORLEY. (Harrap. 10s.)

This large book, with its fanciful black and white illustrations and its fascinating gold wrapper, seems to promise all the magic which Mr. James Branch Cabell, in his brief introduction, declares it contains. But magic has eluded Mr. Corley. Magic is not to be wooed with *chinoiserie*s, with ghostly spirits, with tales of enchanted seas. What it is that can woo magic, it is difficult to say; but, in days of sophistication and disbelief, one thing is certain. If magic in books is to cast its spell, it must be clothed in real (not specious) beauty of language, the beauty of language, for example, of "Thais." Not that Mr. Corley's prose is actually specious, but it lacks grace and lucidity, although it is not without an occasional suggestion of loveliness. The two best tales deal with the things of earth. "The Legend of the Little Horses" is the story of a French-Canadian farmer who goes to the fair to sell his cow and spends all his money on the roundabouts. It is moving, even beautiful, but rather too diffuse. The scene of "The Glass Eye of Throgmorton" is laid in British East Africa. Distinct touches of Conrad are observable, particularly in the interruptions to the narrative and the narrator's manner of alluding to the girl Trudie. "The Price of Reflection," a Russian story, is also good but quite spoilt by being told in broken English. There are some pretty fancies in "The Daimyo's Bowl."

A Sailor of Napoleon. By JOHN LESTERMAN. Illustrated by ROWLAND HILDER. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)

This is a sound adventure story, and should be well received at Christmas by more thoughtful boys. There are many tales about the Navy which fought the French, and some of them are extraordinarily good, but there are not nearly so many about the Navy which fought the English. It is always exciting to get behind the enemy's lines and see what he is doing and thinking and feeling, and that is what Mr. Lesterman has done. Marcel Cortés, at sixteen, is compelled to accept a commission in the Republican fleet, as an alternative to possible imprisonment, because he is thought implicated in the escape of John Fogarthy, a young English officer on parole in Toulon. He is no sooner appointed to his ship, than his adventures begin. At Trafalgar he is captured by the English and, in his turn, is put on parole under the protection of the Earl of Fogarthy, John's father. Marcel is real, reasonably brave and modest. His first adventure, when in command of three ships he sails out of Toulon harbour, will endear him to the chivalrous and sympathetic. Mr. Hilder's drawings are cunningly effective. It is pleasant to see a book like this illustrated in the modern style. His drawing of "Their Nelson was perpetually cruising off the coast," and of Marcel's meeting with Napoleon are most suggestive and amusing.

